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Editors' Notes

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Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) offers one of the most influential theories on postcolonial pedagogy. Freire contrasts a traditional authoritarian model of education, the "banking model" in which educators impart knowledge to the uneducated as if filling empty coffers with coins, with a dialogical model in which teachers and students learn together through dialogue and problem-solving. Freire argues that a dialogical model of education will help foster Marxist revolution in Latin America and help thwart the cycle of authoritarian governance that has been endemic to the region in both capitalist and Marxist regimes. A dialogical, problem-solving model of pedagogy, he suggests, will prepare a citizenry simultaneously to question the oppressive conditions of their societies and to participate more actively in democratic governance following revolution.

It is easy to see why Freire's model might be influential in postcolonial circles. Clearly informed not just by Marxist theory but also by the anti-colonial movements occurring throughout the world when he was writing, Freire argues that the goal of education is to help people overthrow colonialist ideologies, which can come either from foreign occupiers or from the authoritarian elite within their own countries. "Cultural invasion," he argues, can affect the poor (who labour under the misconceptions and false consciousness imposed by the elite) as much as the colonized, and the effects in both cases are the same: a hierarchical culture, divided subjectivity for the oppressed, and a tendency toward mimicry of the elite (153).

While Freire developed his pedagogical model working with the illiterate poor in Brazil, his theories have nevertheless influenced educators working in more privileged locations. In her book *Teaching to Transgress* (1994), for example, bell hooks advocates teaching for liberation in the United States. Her model shares many features with Freire's, to whom

she openly acknowledges a debt. hooks advocates dialogical methods of democratic and open discussion in order to teach for radical social change around issues of race, gender, and class. Like Freire, she believes that teachers must learn along with students and that the banking model of education reinforces the status quo.

One might argue with Freire and hooks about the necessary link between pedagogical practice and its effects. One could contest the idea, for example, that discussion-based, dialogic methods are inherently liberatory in the sense of promoting radical social change. Engaging students in dialogue can be a way of increasing student involvement in the classroom rather than a radical political gesture. Indeed, critics of Freire have pointed out that encouraging privileged students to become more actively involved in discussion can reinforce their middle- or upper- class narcissism. Similarly, one might challenge the idea that lecture necessarily reinforces the status quo. Subject matter and approach, as well as students' receptivity and reactions, undoubtedly play a significant role in the effects of any pedagogical method.

But let's accept, for the sake of argument, Freire's and hooks' implicit position that the methods of education are potentially liberatory regardless of the contents and the circumstances of instruction. To what extent does Freire's model of teaching for liberation remain useful in the varied contexts and conditions of global teaching today? One might argue that the world has changed significantly in ways that challenge Freire's model. Traditional colonialism, according to Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri and others, has ended. Similarly, many scholars, such as Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, argue that the possibility of traditional Marxist revolution has ended as well. Perhaps more important is the condition of global education today. Freire's model depends on the assumption that repressive, authoritarian regimes favour traditional pedagogical methods while more progressive education promotes liberation. Arguably, contemporary education reverses these conditions. American institutions dominate higher education today. Increasingly, these institutions are spreading their tendrils globally, courting students from around the world for education in North America and opening satellite campuses in locations overseas. Meanwhile, because of the over-

production of university teachers and the under-supply of jobs in the U.S., American PhDs are migrating around the world in search of work, bringing their teaching methods with them. As the essays soon to be discussed suggest, the American educational model, at least in the discipline of English, embraces Freire's dialogical, student-centred teaching paradigm (even if those methods are not always achievable due to class size and other constraints). At the same time, American institutions and American-trained educators often teach students in or from more traditional, authoritarian educational and social settings. In other words, even if one disagrees with the diagnoses of Hardt, Negri, Laclau, and Mouffe that traditional colonialism and the possibility of Marxist revolution have ended, one might still arrive at the conclusion that Freire's progressive model of education is no longer particularly revolutionary. On the contrary, Freire's methods are practiced and disseminated by the nation that arguably exercises global economic hegemony and is responsible for the major forms of contemporary colonialism.

How might we reconcile this apparent contradiction? In her article in this issue of *ARIEL*, Marielle Risse describes her teaching of an Elizabeth Barrett Browning poem in a class in Salalah, Oman. Most education in Oman, she writes, is traditional. High schools emphasize memorization. Discussion and debate, as well as the notion that students might be expected to develop their own ideas and opinions, are foreign. Omani teaching methods accompany a traditional, tribal society, where people live in extended family groups, the family rather than the state and charities is the primary support network, marriage is arranged and tightly regulated (marrying a foreigner, for example, is illegal in most circumstances), women are expected to acquiesce to male authority, men and women are separated in public spaces, religious faith is widespread and socially compulsory, and national identity is linked with religious identity. As an American educator teaching in Oman, Risse introduces certain innovations: she sits in a circle with her students, she encourages classroom discussion, she asks for students' opinions. She also teaches in a mixed classroom containing both men and women (although it is unclear whether she or her school introduces this innovation). Despite these innovations, she adamantly re-

jects the idea that the goal of her teaching is to liberate her students. To do so, she suggests, would be not only colonial, it would be quite impossible given that Omanis disapprove of Western culture and beliefs. Her goals are far more modest: to help students learn "about other cultures in order to interact effectively with them" (141) and "understand how the same event can be seen differently in different cultures" (142). Her aim, in other words, is cross-cultural understanding, which she regards as important because Salalah is rapidly becoming more international and more multicultural. Cross-cultural understanding is different from colonialism, she suggests, even when it involves instruction in the language and techniques of the global hegemonic power because Omani students' engagement with English culture inevitably occurs in the terms of their own culture.

In a recent essay in *College Literature*, U.S. professor Mary Jo Kietzman describes a similar, more limited-term cross-cultural teaching stint in Kazakhstan. Supported by a Fulbright grant, Kietzman taught at the Semey State Pedagogical Institute, which was about to undergo an important accreditation review. Trading on the international prestige of American education, the administrator at the Institute regarded Kietzman as a symbolic figure of reform and innovation who would bolster the Institute's accreditation application. Kietzman was invited to assume, in her ironic words, the "role of heroic democratic liberator, the hybrid of Western imperialist and Soviet authority" (meaning, in the case of Soviet authority, a commanding, privileged outsider coming to whip the school into shape) (107). Kietzman introduces teaching practices that resemble Freire's methods. She engages in dialogue and debate with her students as they prepare a performance of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. She encourages students to share their life experiences during discussions about the play. She learns along with the students. She welcomes resistance to her authority and increasingly transfers authority over the play's production to her students. She emphasizes independent critical thinking. She encourages political and social debate that is prohibited in other school and social contexts. She challenges dominant modes of authoritarian literary instruction handed down from the Soviet era, modes which emphasize summaries of content rather than

active engagement with literary texts. Like Risse, however, Kietzman resists the idea that her teaching represents a form of imperialism, in part because studying Shakespeare in Kazakhstan is not "a simple matter of cultural imperialist transmission" (Kazakhstan was subject to Soviet imperialism rather than imperialism from an English-speaking country), in part because the students' engagement with Shakespeare occurs in the terms of their own culture, and in part because the English language, for Kazakhstani students today, symbolizes "contact with the global world," freedom of choice, economic opportunity, foreign travel, and cultural integration (111). Like Risse, Kietzman concludes that in global teaching, as well as teaching in one's home environment, "it is incumbent on the teacher to facilitate a cross-cultural dialogue" (126). As with Risse, cross-cultural dialogue for Kietzman is distinctly different from colonialism, even when it involves instruction in the language and techniques of the reigning global power.

Both essays are provocative in a number of ways: in the way they explore the implications of our pedagogical aims and methods in today's diverse teaching environments for Anglophone literature; in the way they challenge traditional ideas about the relationship between teaching methods and politics; in the way they challenge assumptions about the relationship between pedagogy and colonialism; and, finally, in the way they contemplate, to varying degrees, the relationship between global education and global capital. Both essays also raise a number of questions and invite further conversation. Some of the questions relate to systemic conditions and forces. Why are educators of English literature in the places they are? What is English literature instruction used for today? What is the real or perceived value of the English language in different locations around the world, and how do our pedagogical goals and methods relate to these conditions? What are the various desires of students, and how does instruction in the English language and Anglophone literature serve those desires? How, on the other hand, does our teaching serve the interests of educational institutions and funding agencies, and do these interests differ depending on whether the institutions and agencies are for-profit, non-profit, state-funded, or privately-funded?

The essays raise other questions related to the relationship between institutions of higher education and global capital. If, as many scholars argue, globalization is the contemporary form of colonialism, how does the globalization of literary studies and English instruction serve or resist globalization? It is intriguing that American educators are taking positions in Oman and Kazakhstan at the same time that other transnational developments are occurring there. In the case of Salalah, the city is building an international airport and five-star hotels. In the case of Semey, jobs are scarce and "the lives of people . . . are far from secure or predictable" (Kietzman 125). One might explore these connections further. To what extent are institutions of higher education (especially U.S. ones) comparable to multinational corporations? What is the triangulated relationship between institutions of higher education, nation-states, and global capital?

Both essays seem informed by the discourses of American multiculturalism and cultural studies in their insistence on the value of "cross-cultural understanding" and "cross-cultural dialogue." What happens when U.S. multiculturalism and theories of cultural studies are exported outside North America? What are the virtues and the problems of that migration? How do multiculturalism and cultural studies interact with local cultural customs and beliefs, such as those of Salalah, where marrying a foreigner is illegal? How do multiculturalism and cultural studies serve or resist global capital?

To return to Freire and hooks, what might a liberatory or revolutionary or anti-colonial pedagogy look like today? How will these things differ across locations and contexts? It might also be useful to bring the views of Freire and hooks on the revolutionary potential of education into conversation with the views of Louis Althusser, who argues that schools are among the ideological state apparatuses, that schools train people for their economic roles, and that literary study in particular is useful for training people to take positions in upper management because it immerses us in the sophisticated use of language, which can be used to manipulate the lower classes.

Finally, concerned with limning their local contexts, Risse and Kietzman leave an important area unexplored: neither essay addresses

the situation of educators from other parts of the world teaching in North America, and neither addresses educators from outside the U.S. teaching in locations other than their home countries (e.g., an African professor teaching in Europe). It would be illuminating, for example, to hear about the experiences of colleagues of Risse and Kietzman teaching at the same institutions who hail from other parts of the world and feel some distance from the imperial centre even as they may inhabit a role within a potentially neocolonial project. There are, additionally, situations like that of Azar Nafisi, author of *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, where a dissident liberal Iranian taught Iranian students in a context of political repression. Such circumstances suggest the liberatory potential of literature in English for educators forced to submit to a particular curriculum or way of teaching in their own countries. All of these situations deserve attention as well.

The editors of *ARIEL* would therefore like to announce a new section of the journal devoted to Global Pedagogy: we welcome essays, both theoretical and practical, touching on any of the issues and questions raised or suggested by this column. As *ARIEL* is a journal about international English literature, its new Global Pedagogy section offers a forum for pedagogical dialogue and exchange among English literature professors from different parts of the world addressing methods and approaches related to teaching international English literature as well as Anglo-American literature. We welcome articles discussing pedagogical explorations and innovations informed by different cultural values and traditions, particularly those at odds with or resistant to academic capitalism. To launch an anti-colonialist globalization against the globalization that is, as many critics have pointed out, neocolonialism rerun, we especially welcome contributions from what are called the world's geopolitical peripheries. Teaching international English literature in a global context always involves the problem of cultural or cross-cultural translation, for, as Judith Butler points out, without cultural translation, "the only way the assertion of universality can cross a border is through a colonial and expansionist logic" (35). As such the translation of the universal across cultural/linguistic borders is one of the major issues facing educators teaching literature abroad or in their homelands.

We would also like to take this opportunity to announce a special issue on the subject of Global Pedagogy. Specific details may be found in the following call for papers.

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